

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this patent application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 16-18 have been objected to as being improperly dependent from a parent claim; **Claims 13-17** have been rejected as being unpatentable over Slocum in view of Chang et al. under **35 USC 103**; and **Claims 19-23** have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter but being dependent from rejected parent claims. Non-elected **Claims 1-12** have been cancelled, Applicants reserving their right to file one or more divisional patent applications with respect to subject matter not being prosecuted within the present patent application, new **Claims 24 and 25** have been presented, and consequently, **Claims 13-25** are now active in this patent application.

It is respectfully noted to the examiner, and on the record, that no rejection has been set forth with respect to **Claim 18**.

With respect to **Claims 16-18**, the dependency of **Claims 16** and **17** has been amended, and therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the objections to the claims have been overcome.

With respect to the rejection of **Claims 13-17** as being unpatentable over **Slocum** in view of **Chang et al.**, the examiner effectively summarily rejected the claims because the claimed process did not patentably distinguish itself from the prior art in terms of steps.

Accordingly, **Claim 13** has now been amended so as to in fact set forth the various steps of the process, such as,

for example, the disposition of the billet within a container of an extrusion press having a die and a ram; operatively associating a die, having a predeterminedly configured aperture defined therein, with the container; and disposing a mandrel within the aperture of the die such that an annular space is defined between an internal surface portion of the die aperture and an external surface portion of the mandrel; in addition to the remaining originally recited steps of the process.

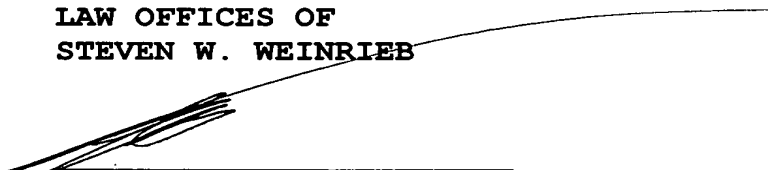
It is submitted that neither one of the prior art references of Slocum or Chang et al. discloses such a claimed process, and therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the process of Claim 13, as well as the additional process steps set forth within **Claims 14-25** which depend from **Claim 13**, patentably define over the prior art of Slocum and Chang et al.

Therefore, in light of the foregoing, it is sub-

mitted that this patent application is now in condition for allowance, and therefore, an early and favorable action to this effect is now anticipated and awaited.

It is lastly noted that this amendment is being filed within a period of three (3) months beyond the normal response due date, and therefore, a check in the amount of \$555.00 is attached hereto for a three (3) month extension of time which is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,
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